Met Office

NEWS

2024: provisionally the fourth warmest year on record for the UK

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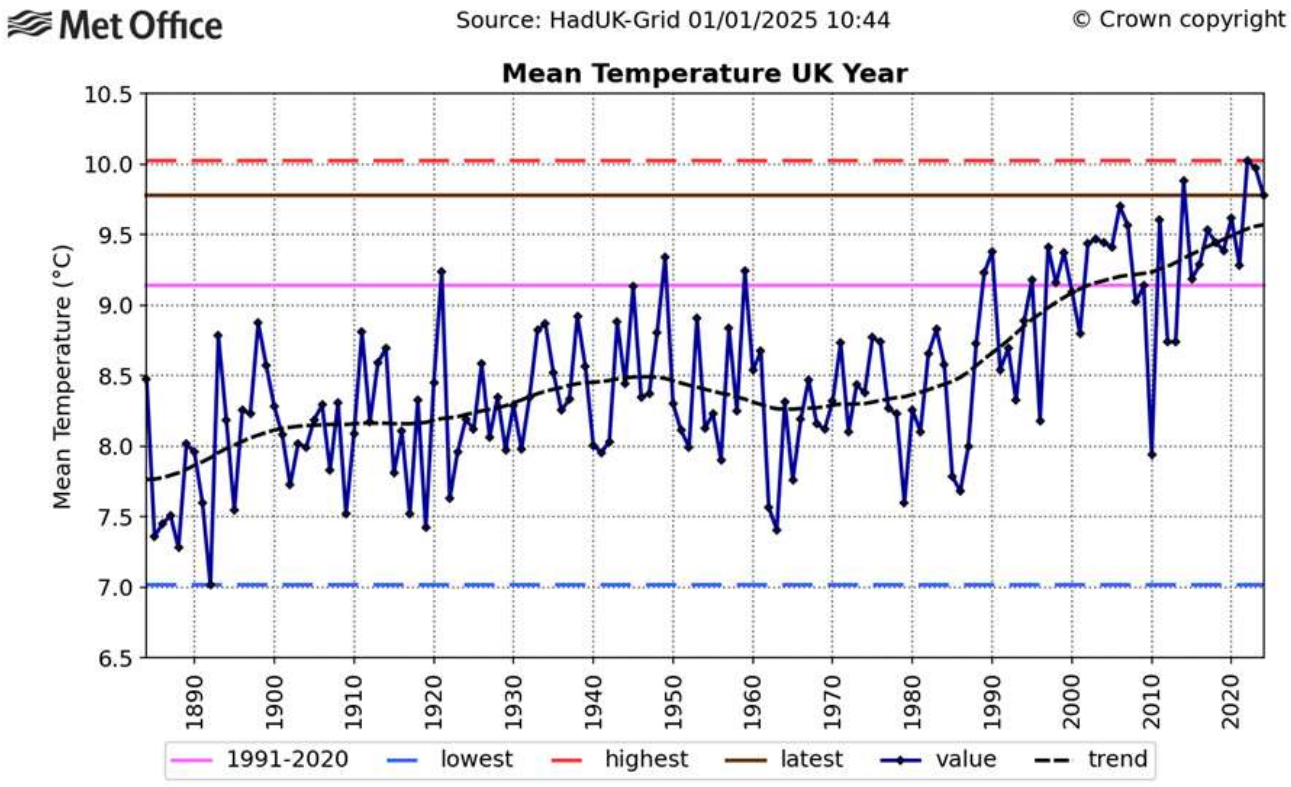
Climate statistics from 2024 show the UK is heading outside of the 'envelope of historical weather observations'.

2024 was provisionally the fourth warmest year on record for the UK, in a series from 1884.

With a mean temperature of 9.78C (0.64C above the 1991-2020 average) it follows 2022, 2023 and 2014 as (provisionally) the fourth warmest year for the UK according to mean temperature.

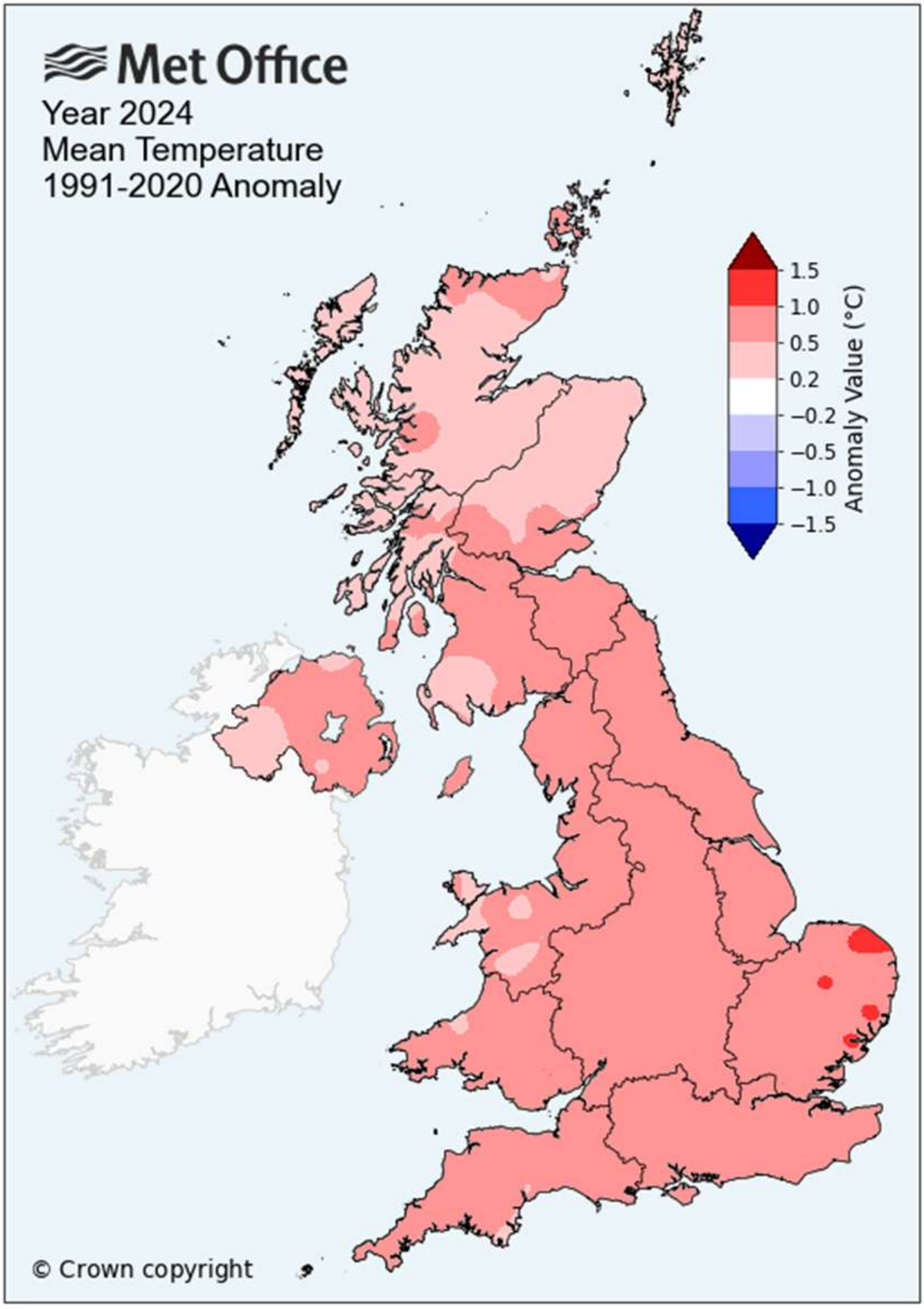
All top 10 warmest years according to mean temperature have been since the year 2000, with five in the most recent decade 2015-2024. Every year of the most recent decade has been warmer than the 1991-2020 long-term average.



The UK annual mean temperature series

The UK experienced its equal-warmest year on record for average minimum temperature, with 6.32°C, equalling the previous record set in 2023. England experienced its warmest year on record for average minimum temperature.

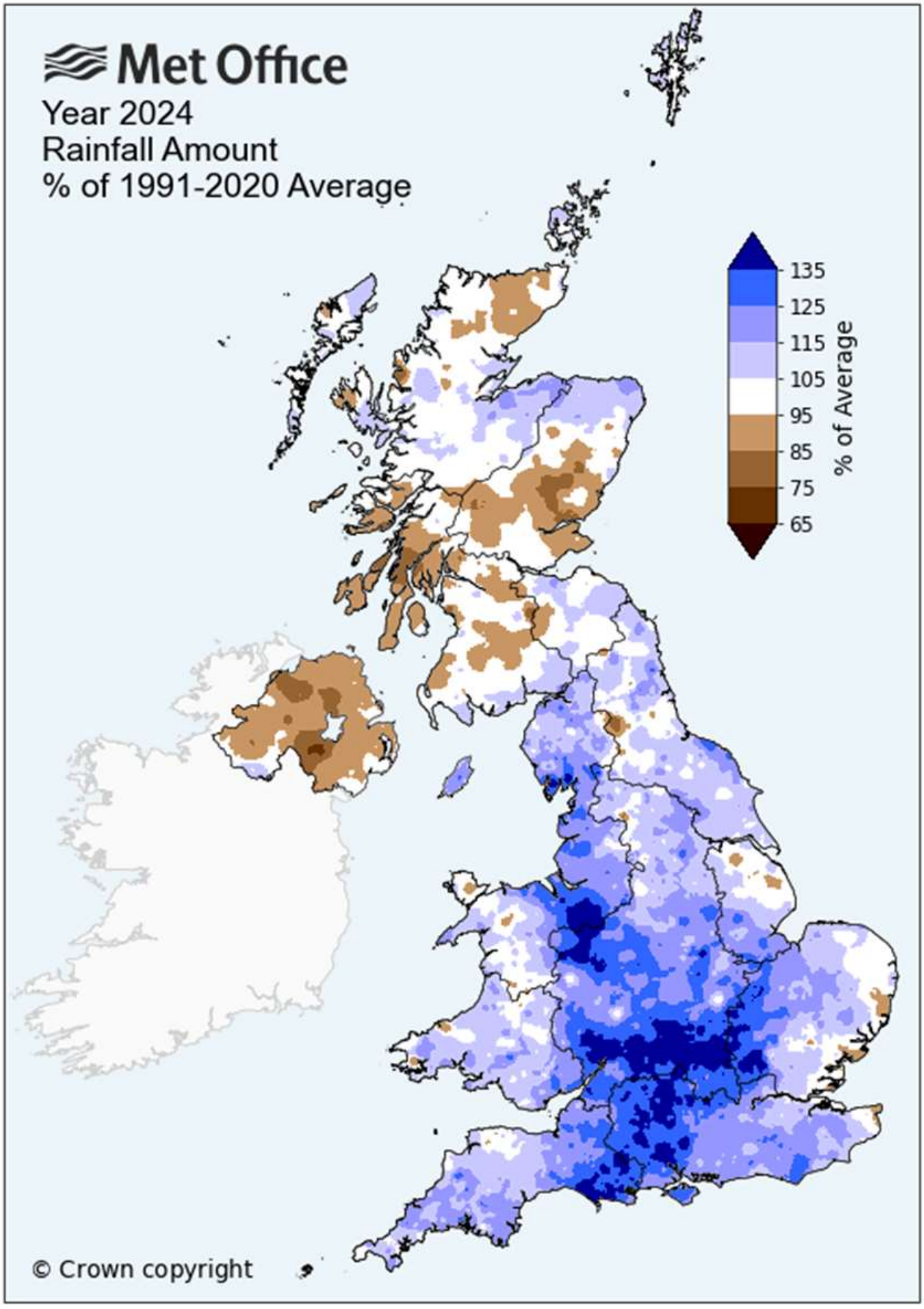
The UK average mean temperature is the average of the maximum and minimum temperatures recorded daily by each weather station in the observing network. The daily maximum temperature usually occurs in the early afternoon and daily minimum temperature overnight. The UK average minimum uses daily minimum observations from all stations.



Met Office Senior Scientist Mike Kendon said: “2024 has been another year with minimum temperatures well above average. We have experienced some particularly mild nights and far fewer frosts than normal, particularly in February and December.”

Eight of the 12 months of the year saw temperatures above the 1991-2020 average, including the warmest May on record, second warmest February and fifth warmest December.

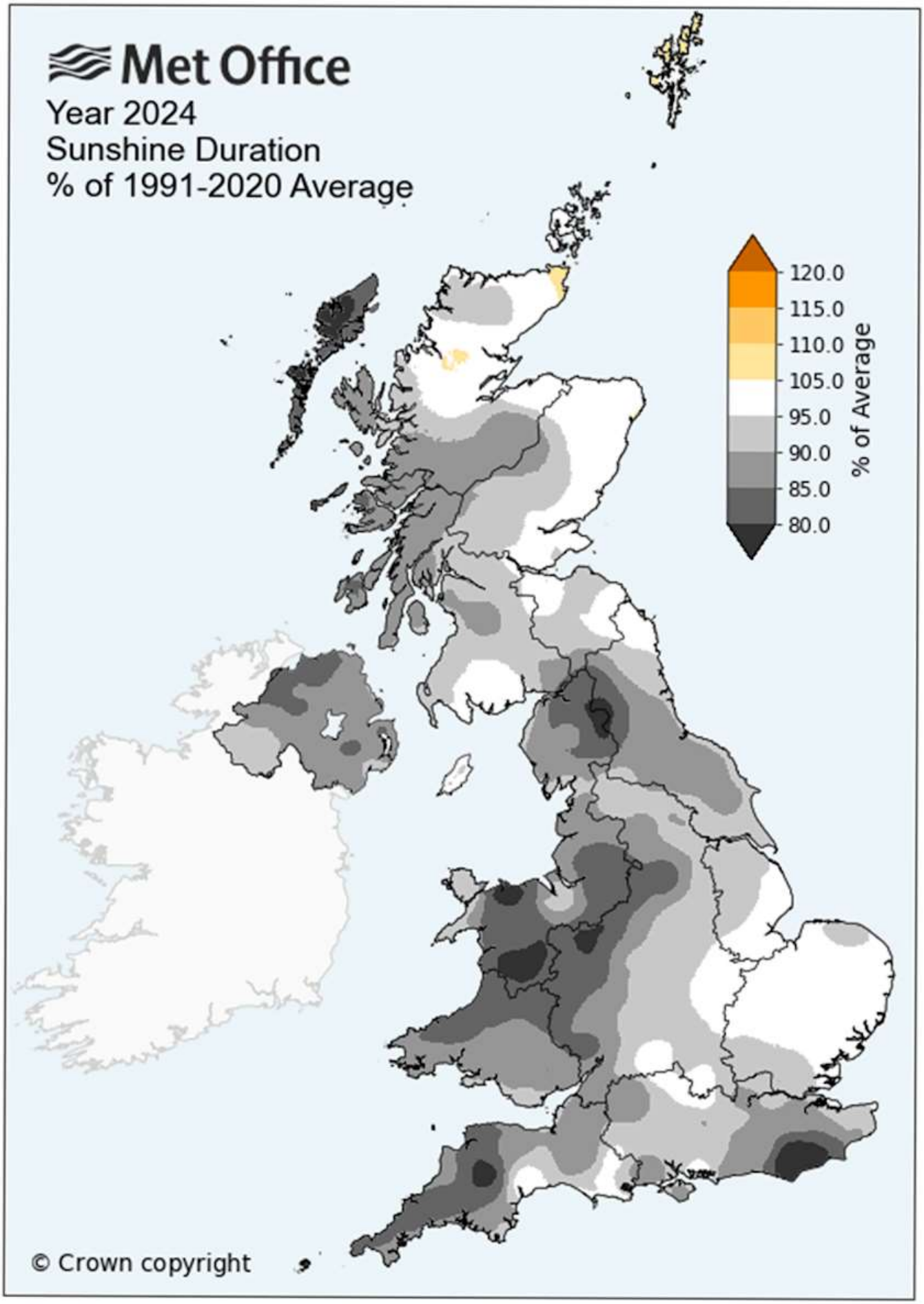
19.9°C was recorded on 28 January 2024 at Achfary, Sutherland, a UK January record. Since 2011, six of the 12 months of the year have now seen new all-time UK highest maximum temperature records set in observations back to the 19th Century.



2024 was another relatively wet year with the UK recording 1242mm, 107% of average rainfall. It was particularly wet across parts of central southern England with a quarter to a third more rain than normal fairly widely.

Oxfordshire, Wiltshire, Gloucestershire, Bedfordshire and Buckinghamshire each recorded their second-wettest year in records from 1836. England had its 8th wettest year, although not as wet as 2023 (ranked 4th).

The year included the UK's 8th wettest winter and 6th wettest spring on record.



Overall, 2024 was a rather dull year with 1274 hours, 91% of 1991-2020 average sunshine. Wales (85%) and Northern Ireland (87%) had their 5th and 2nd dullest years on record in series from 1910.

Impactful weather from floods and strong winds

The year just gone was no stranger to severe weather events causing significant impacts including flooding, fallen trees, power outages, transport disruption, and, tragically, a number of fatalities. The 2023-24 storm season saw letter 'L' reached with storm Lilian in August 2024, the most named storms since naming was introduced in Autumn 2015.

Storm *Henk* on 2 January brought widespread flooding as a culmination to the wet end to 2023. The winter half-year October 2023 to March 2024 was the wettest on record for England and Wales.

A succession of low-pressure systems brought very wet weather in late September. Oxfordshire and Bedfordshire had their wettest calendar months on record in series from 1836, and a long-running station at Oxford its wettest calendar month for 250 years. Parts of central southern England recorded 350% of average rainfall for the month.

Storm *Bert* brought wet weather to south Wales and parts of south-west and southern England in late November, with 150mm or more of rain falling in the wettest areas, causing significant flooding problems.

Red warnings for wind were issued for storm *Isha* on 22 January, affecting north-east Scotland, and *Darragh* on 6-7 December affecting West Wales and south-west England. These were the UK's most notable wind storms since *Eunice* on 18 February 2022. The strongest winds from Darragh were from an unusual northerly direction as the storm tracked eastwards. Similar to Storm Arwen in November 2021, which also saw northerly winds, this resulted in significant numbers of fallen trees.

Late November brought a brief influx of Arctic Maritime air, resulting in the UK's most significant November snow since 2010. Unusually, there was lying snow as far south as Met Office Headquarters in Exeter.

Met Office Senior Scientist Mike Kendon said: "With 2024 joining the top ten warmest years for the UK's annual temperature series, once again this is a clear illustration that our climate is changing, right now, and we continue to head up this warming curve.

"The fact that all ten of the most recent years have been above the 1991-2020 average demonstrates that this recent period, entirely within my own adult lifetime, is a stark reminder of just how fast our climate is changing. We have not had a top ten coldest year in the UK since 1963.

"The UK receives weather influences from all points of the compass, and we are all familiar with just how variable our weather can often be from one day to the next. However, the long-term pattern in the observations is undeniable: the global climate is warming and there is clear evidence of this in the UK's own temperature series. We are heading outside the envelope of historical observations."

Read: Review of 2024: Multiple records broken in a year of mixed weather

December 2024

December 2024 was provisionally the UK's fifth warmest December on record, in a series from 1884.

The month started on an exceptionally mild note, with a December average minimum temperature on 1 December of 10.1°C, the UK's highest December value on record in a daily series from 1960 and the first time 10°C has been exceeded.

Christmas Day was also extremely mild, reaching 14.2°C at Dyce, Aberdeen, with minimum temperatures in northern Scotland holding up above 10°C.

In addition to the disruption from *Darragh*, the month closed with some further stormy weather in northern Scotland. 150 to 200mm of rain fell in the West Highlands in the last three days of the month.

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